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EXAMINER
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NILAND, PATRICK DENNIS

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1714

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/092,077	<b>Applicant(s)</b> WAMPRECHT ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b> Patrick D. Niland	<b>Art Unit</b> 1714	

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --**  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 May 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

Art Unit: 1714

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114 was filed in this application after appeal to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences, but prior to a decision on the appeal. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114 and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the appeal has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114 and prosecution in this application has been reopened pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 5/30/06 has been entered.

2. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

3. Claims 1-12 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-12 of copending Application No. 10/092212. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because they overlap in scope such that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the instant invention to make the instantly claimed invention from the claims of the copending application.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented. The applicant presents no arguments for this rejection. There is no process for holding such rejections in abeyance. It is therefore maintained.

4. Claims 1-12 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-12 of US Pat. No. 6642302 Wamprecht et al. which is allowed Application No. 10/091960. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because, although the claims differ somewhat in scope, they overlap such that it would have been obvious to the ordinary skilled artisan at the time of the instant invention to perform the instantly claimed invention from the claims of the copending application because most of the copending claims' invention is that of the instant claims.

The applicant's argue that the patentee "teaches a reaction for the production of polyurethanes that is not the same as the present claimed invention. Wamprecht '302 is directed to water soluble or water dispersible polyurethanes that contain polyether polyols, diisocyanate, monoalcohol, oximes and, optionally, monoisocyanates. Wamprecht does not teach the composition of the current claimed invention in which a polyether polyol, diisocyanate, monoisocyanate and, optionally, monoalcohol are combined. Therefore, the rejection based on the judicially created doctrine of obvious-type double patenting should be withdrawn."

Again, the claims overlap in scope so much that the ordinary skilled artisan would have practiced the instantly claimed invention from the patentee's claims. The oxime is encompassed by "comprising" of the instant claims. Isophorone diisocyanate is exemplified by the patentee as one of the very few claimed "(cylco)aliphatic diisocyanates" defined by the patentee's specification. For reasons analogous to those stated regarding Emmons and the Applicant's

Art Unit: 1714

arguments of page 6 and the fact that the polyurethane of the patentee encompasses those of the instant claims and the methods overlap, it is expected that the polyurethane of the patentee's claims will have a softening point falling within the instantly claimed broad range.

There is no process for holding this rejection in abeyance and it is maintained for the above reasons.

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Pat. No. 4079028 Emmons et al..

Emmons discloses a polyurethane thickener which is the reaction product of diisocyanate, polyether polyol having 3 or more OH groups, monoalcohol and monoamine. Upon reaction with the isocyanate, the polyetherpolyol will have 4 or more OH groups where it began with 3 OH groups and will possess urethane groups. It is not possible to distinguish this portion of the reaction product of the instant claims and the prior art based on the ingredients which initially formed the polyurethane segment. In other words, making the polyurethane thickener from only the instantly claimed polyether a1 will necessarily give moieties falling within the scope of both a1 and a2 upon reaction with diisocyanate. It is also expected that the patentee's reaction of diisocyanate with the polyether polyol will give a mixture falling within the scope of the instant claim 8, step A. Since the final polyurethane of claims 1-7 and 11-12 encompasses reacting all of the polyethers with polyisocyanates, the newly submitted amendment does not distinguish the final polyurethane of the instant claims over that of the patentee because all of the polyether is

reacted with polyisocyanate in the final polyurethane. The reaction of polyisocyanate with polyether polyol does not occur instantaneously. Therefore, at some point in the reaction the newly recited limitation of the instant method claims 8-10 relating to the amount of polyether polyol which initially reacts with polyisocyanate is necessarily met. Subsequent reaction to this point of reaction is within the scope of the remaining reaction of the instant claims.

Upon reaction with the diisocyanate, the polyetherpolyol will have 4 or more OH groups where it began with 3 OH groups and will possess urethane groups in an intermediate product which will necessarily occur as predicted by statistics involved in such reactions of large numbers of molecules, as would be readily understood by the ordinary skilled artisan as such chemical statistics are taught in undergraduate school. It is emphasized that this relates to the intermediate in which one molecule of diisocyanate has reacted to connect two molecules of polyol. It is understood that the reaction will proceed further to give the final polyurethane, which may or may not have any free OH groups. Since the instant claims are directed to the final polyurethane per se and the method of making it, it is enough that the final product have moieties which could be attributed to the instantly claimed components of component A, where related to the polyurethane claims, and that such intermediates form, where related to the method claims. The applicant provides no probative evidence that such intermediates do not form. The PTO has no facilities to make such determinations and it is axiomatic that the onus is on the applicant to provide such evidence. The polyurethane need not be made from the reactants of the instant claims because the instant claims are directed to the polyurethane final product and the method of making it. It is not possible to distinguish the polyurethane of the instant claims and the polyurethane of the prior art based on the ingredients which initially formed the polyurethane segment. In other words, making the polyurethane thickener from only the instantly claimed polyether a1 will necessarily give moieties falling within the scope of both a1 and a2 upon reaction of 2 or more molecules of polyether polyol with diisocyanate. Such intermediate

reaction will necessarily occur statistically and gives the components of the instant method claims. It is also expected that the patentee's reaction of diisocyanate with the polyether polyol will give a mixture falling within the scope of the instant claim 8, step A, at least as an intermediate of the reaction of Emmons. This again is expected from statistical analysis of the reaction occurring in Emmons.

Emmons discloses the combination of monols and amines at column 9, lines 46-68 and column 10, lines 1-19. The degree of picking and choosing required to arrive at the instantly claimed invention is sufficient to remove this reference from the scope of an anticipating reference under the relevant caselaw, such as but not limited to *In re Baird*. See column 2, lines 59-68; column 3, lines 1-68, particularly 31-61; column 4, lines 1-5; column 6, lines 1-68; column 8, lines 1-23 and 48-68; column 9, lines 46-68; and the remainder of the document, particularly the examples. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the instant invention to use the instantly claimed combination of ingredients to form the thickener of the patentee because the patentee clearly encompasses such mixtures of reactants and the instantly claimed combination of ingredients would have been expected to give the thickening properties discussed by the patentee. The smaller amount of picking and choosing in the prior art is deemed by the examiner to lead to the choice of the instantly claimed reactant combinations discussed above. Thus, the motivation to combine the reactants taught by one single reference to be useful together and selected from a rather small pool of reactants is deemed to make the instant claims obvious over the cited prior art for the reasons stated above. The applicant's arguments in this regard are therefore not persuasive. It is not seen that the polyurethane thickeners would not necessarily have a softening temperature falling within the scope of that of the instant claims and the instantly claimed softening temperature is typically expected of such polyether based polyurethane thickeners of the molecular weights encompassed by the patentee. It is noted that the method of measuring the instantly claimed softening point is

Art Unit: 1714

not specified and such methods of measuring polymer softening points lead to different values. The applicant has also not claimed a method of making the polymer but has claimed the polyurethane per se. There is no probative evidence that the instantly claimed reactants do not give the polyurethane argued above nor that they give any unexpected results. The instantly claimed softening temperature is not seen as giving any unexpected results. The isocyanate of column 8, lines 48-61-62 is isophorone diisocyanate. This list is not so large as to mitigate against a finding of anticipation. The isocyanate is disclosed with sufficient specificity to anticipate the isocyanate of the instant claims particularly in view of the fact that it is one of the most commonly used isocyanates.

Applicant's argument "On the other hand, in the present invention a slight excess of isocyanate is always used, which is eliminated at the end of the preparation (see the examples in the specification). is not persuasive since the instant claims do not require elimination of the excess NCO at the end of the preparation and the instant claims encompass the use of a vast excess of OH to NCO at the start, presumably of the reaction, at 0.5:1 NCO:OH, which contradicts the applicant's arguments regarding an excess of NCO always being required, as well as the stoichiometric amount of NCO:OH, i.e. 1:1 NCO:OH of the prior art. This argument is therefore not born out by the applicant's own claims and does not distinguish the product of the instant claims over that of the patentee. Column 8, lines 61-62 is isophorone diisocyanate. This list of isocyanates is not so large that the ordinary skilled artisan would not readily use this most popular of diisocyanates in the reaction product of the patentee. The applicant's argument re isophorone diisocyanate is therefore not persuasive. This list of isocyanates is not "every possible moiety". It is a few well known very often used urethane forming monomers. No unexpected results are seen in a manner commensurate in scope with the instant claims and the cited prior art stemming from the use of isophorone diisocyanate, including the alleged positive rheological properties argued by the applicant's representative. The instantly claimed



Art Unit: 1714

polyurethane is not seen to be distinct from that of the prior art based on the use of the reactants of the instantly claimed component A.

Applicants request authority for the assertion that Emmons' polyurethane discussed above necessarily contains moieties having the instantly claimed combinations of polyols of the instantly claimed component A. The applicant's representative is noticed that the instant claims are directed to the polyurethane per se. The polyurethane of Emmons may have a molecular weight of up to 200000 per column 2, lines 56-58. This polyurethane will contain several units of the patentee's polyether polyols which must have "at least 3 OH groups" which are connected by diisocyanates. The applicant's representative is to consider the reaction product of one molecule of diisocyanate with two molecules of polyether polyol having at least three OH groups. The final reaction product will be a polyol having 4 OH groups and 2 urethane groups. This moiety will be present in the polyurethane of Emmons several times and falls within the scope of the instantly claimed component a2) clearly. The other polyether polyols of Emmons having at least 3 OH groups will also be present repeatedly in the polyurethane of Emmons of higher molecular weights and clearly falls within the scope of the instantly claimed component a1). This was clearly described above. Since the polyurethane final product is claimed in the instant claims, not the process of making it, and the polyurethane of Emmons has the moieties required by the instantly claimed component A, as clearly described above and more clearly described now, Emmons' polyurethane falls within the scope of the polyurethanes of the instant claims regarding the instantly claimed component A. This should be readily clear to the applicant's representative based on the rudiments of polyurethane reactions of polyols and polyisocyanates and should require no further authority as it is clear on its face. The examiner also notes that at least 3 OH groups encompasses 4 OH groups and such compounds reacted with the diisocyanate of Emmons will have 6 OH groups in the moiety present in the polyurethane of Emmons by the thought experiment described above.

Art Unit: 1714

The applicant's argument that "Surely the reaction of two or more isocyanate groups in the polyisocyanates used in Marz or Emmons can react with two or more hydroxyl groups on the same polyol. This is true. But the instant claims are to a polyurethane and the polyurethane of Emmons or Marz will necessarily contain the moieties implied by the components of the instantly claimed component A, as clearly illustrated above. The examiner does not have to illustrate that any pathway is more favorable than another in making the final polyurethane because the instant claims do not have enough limitations to imply a final product by which any particular pathway is favored and the polyurethane of Emmons or Marz will clearly have the moieties implied by the instantly claimed component A. The applicant can draw out all of the possible polyurethanes which can result from the high molecular weight polyurethane of Emmons using the ingredients of Emmons and will see that he can in fact excise the moieties which would have resulted from the instantly claimed component A.

The applicant questions whether the instantly claimed obviousness rationale is in Emmons and requests that the examiner cite another reference to support his position on Emmons. No other reference is needed. The motivation and teachings requisite for obviousness are clearly in Emmons on its face, more so now that the applicant's representative is expected to more clearly see how the polyurethane of Emmons will necessarily contain the moieties implied by the instantly claimed component A. No affidavit is required for the above reasons also.

As stated at column 8, lines 48-61-62 is isophorone diisocyanate is disclosed by the patentee. The Sauer declaration is not commensurate in scope with the cited prior art and the instant claims and is therefore not persuasive to overcome the instant rejection.

The applicant continually stated that IPDI (IPOI is assumed to be IPDI) is not taught. The applicant's representative is again referred to column 8, lines 61-62 which is IPDI. The argued standards of a prima facie case of obviousness have been well met above. No probative evidence to the contrary is seen. It is not seen that the newly recited limitations regarding component A

Art Unit: 1714

are not inherent in the above argued polyurethane. The instant claims containing the newly presented limitation regarding the production of component A are directed to the polyurethane per se, not its method of production. It is not seen that the above discussed polyurethane of the patentee does not necessarily and inherently possess the moieties implied by the new product by process of making component A. Such moieties would be expected in the above discussed polyurethane necessarily purely from statistical considerations of the reactions of  $10^{23}$  molecules. No probative evidence is seen to the contrary that the polyurethane of the patentee discussed above does not fall within the scope of that of the instant claims. The argument that a different process is disclosed in Emmons than in the instant claims is not relevant regarding the instant polyurethane claims and composition claims since the polyurethane of Emmons would appear to be that of the instant claims where IPDI of column 8, lines 61-62 is used. Regarding the instant process claims, it is not seen that the reaction of Emmons discussed above does not meet the instant method claims. The expectation of success in Emmons is that they make polyurethanes. It is not seen where this leads to an absence of expectation of success. It is not even seen where the instant invention establishes any "success" nor, more importantly to patentability considerations, any unexpected results over that of Emmons in a manner commensurate in scope with the instant claims and the cited prior art.

The applicant is incorrect in that "Emmons fails to teach or suggest the additional step in the production of polyurethanes of creating a polyether alcohol mixture of polyether polyols with an average functionality of  $\geq 3$  and polyether polyols with an average functionality of  $\geq 4$  by a partial reaction of up to 50 mole % of polyether polyols with an average functionality of  $\geq 3$  with isocyanates with an average functionality of  $\geq 2$ ". Specifically, it is noted that Emmons discloses reacting polyether triol and diisocyanate at column 2, lines 59-68; column 3, lines 1-68, particularly 1-30, 31-68, which encompasses the instantly claimed reactants including diisocyanates and polyether polyols having 3 or more OH groups; column 8, lines 1-23, which

Art Unit: 1714

encompasses the instantly claimed polyether polyols having 3 or more OH groups, and lines 48-68 which discloses reacting the polyether polyols with diisocyanates including isophorone diisocyanate (column 8, lines 61-62). It is noted that the isocyanate/alcohol reaction does not occur instantly. It requires some time. During this time, some molecules of triol will react with diisocyanate to give a tetraol having two urethane groups for example and then with more time will further build up molecular weight until all reactivity is complete. Formation of only one molecule of two polyether triols joined by a diisocyanate to give a tetraol containing two urethane groups fulfills the instantly claimed component A as well as reacts "up to 50 mole % of the polyether triols with diisocyanate because "up to" is inclusive down to one molecule in these claims. The applicant provides no probative evidence to the contrary. This reaction meets the process limitations of the instant claim 8 and its dependent claims. The reaction will proceed past the formation of the putative tetraol discussed above to give the final polyurethane. The instant claims recite no order of addition, no amounts, no degree of polymerization nor any other parameters which distinguish the reaction of the patentee from that of the instant method claims. For similar reasons, the product by process of the instant claim 1 and its dependent claims is not different than that of the patentee discussed above.

The instant claim 1 and its dependent claims are ultimately directed to the polyurethane per se. The instantly claimed reaction does not distinguish over the reaction which occurs in Emmons for the reasons stated above. Furthermore, the instant product claims will contain the above discussed polyether triol moieties joined by diisocyanate moieties throughout the molecules of polyurethane as dictated by the reactions which may occur in the reaction mixtures discussed in the above rejection where diisocyanate and triol are used with the other disclosed reactants. Where two triols are joined by diisocyanate, a tetraol moiety containing urethane

Art Unit: 1714

groups is formed. These are the moieties that the instantly claimed component a2) will contribute to the polyurethane.

The applicant is correct in asserting that the examiner is stating that the reaction of diisocyanates with polyether triols is equivalent to preparing a mixture according to the instant claims 1 and 8 component or step A for the reasons discussed above. The applicant provides no probative evidence to the contrary.

The applicant argues "Clearly, a polyether polyol of single functionality is not equivalent to a mixture of polyether polyol with average functionality of  $\geq 3$  and  $\geq 4$  as recited in component A) of independent claims 1 and 8." This is true. However, this is not what the examiner has argued.

The examiner has argued that the reaction product of a mixture of polyether triol and diisocyanate according to Emmons will make one or more molecules of polyether tetraol having two urethane groups, which is a2 of the instant claims and the unreacted polyether triol is a1 of the instant claims. Since the reaction of the triol and diisocyanate of Emmons is not instantaneous and the instant claims do not recite sufficient limitations to distinguish over this reaction scheme of Emmons, the process of Emmons is that of the instant claim 8 and the product resulting therefrom is that of the instant claim 1 where polyether triol, diisocyanate, and the other reactants of Emmons and the instant claims are used. There is not probative evidence to the contrary. In other words, the instantly claimed process steps do not distinguish over Emmons where the instantly claimed triols, diisocyanates, and other reactants are used because the reaction of Emmons necessarily makes the instantly claimed component a2 in the claimed

Art Unit: 1714

amount at some point in time of the reaction of Emmons. Again, no probative evidence to the contrary is seen.

The applicant argues that the object is to make  $\leq 50$  mole% of the instantly claimed polyether polyols having  $\geq 4$  OH groups. This is actually not claimed nor would it be the necessary result of the claim limitations which allow for up to 50 mole % of the polyethers a1 to be reacted with isocyanates of functionality  $\geq 2$ . Thus, two moles of a1 would give 1 or fewer moles of a2 at the maximum allowed reaction depending on the amounts of polyisocyanate and polyol and their functionalities and the reaction scheme used.

In the spirit of the intended argument, the initial reaction of the components of Emmons prior to completion of the entire reaction will necessarily give some triol and some tetraol according to the instant claims prior to completion of the reaction. The ultimate product of claim 1 allows for completion of the reaction, at which time the moieties coming from A and those resulting from a1 reacting with C are indistinguishable where C is the same as the polyisocyanate of A. Thus, the instant claims do not distinguish over Emmons.

The applicant is correct in their statement that "Reactions such as those alluded to by the examiner would produce only a fraction of polyether polyols with average functionality of  $\geq 4$  described in independent claims 1 and 8." at page 6 of their brief. This supports the examiner's arguments above. The instant claims only require a fraction of polyether polyols with a functionality of  $\geq 4$  OH groups to be produced, specifically the fraction resulting from reacting "up to 50 mole % of the polyethers a1" with polyisocyanate, though this limitation is not present in claim 8.

Art Unit: 1714

The examiner has not stated that “any mixture” meets the claims. See above. Regarding the product claims, the mixture of polyols having 3 or more OH groups of Emmons and the diisocyanates of Emmons will give a polyurethane having the moieties of the instantly claimed component a1 and a2 for the reasons stated above and the applicants statement at page 6 of their brief bolded above. a1 will be consumed by C and thus can give more a2 moieties. For the reasons stated above, this argument of the applicant does not overcome the rejection based on Emmons.

The applicant argues that “Emmons provides no teaching or suggestion that would make it obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to prepare a mixture of polyether polyols recited in component A of independent claims 1 and 8 to produce a polyurethane thickener with improved high shear viscosity.” The applicant’s statement at page 6 bolded above and the examiner’s accompanying arguments make it very clear that the reaction product of Emmons, which is called a thickener, that contains the instantly claimed triol, diisocyanate, and other reactants B through E will be the same polyurethane as that of the instant claims 1 and 8 though the intermediate formation of the polyether tetraol containing urethane groups (e.g. the instantly claimed component a2) is not discussed by Emmons though the formation of this intermediate is acknowledged by the applicant at page 6 of their brief as bolded above. The alleged improvements in high shear viscosity have not been demonstrated by the applicant in a manner commensurate in scope with the instant claims and the cited prior art. They are expected to be a function of the type of polyether used, its molecular weight, the amount of monofunctional components used, the HLB of the final polyurethane, etc. However, where the instantly claimed triol of a1 and diisocyanate are used in Emmons, which clearly encompasses these components

Art Unit: 1714

as stated above, the intermediate a2 of the instant claims 1 and 8 is expected to form, including in the amount of the instant claim 1.

The applicant's reference to the low shear viscosities of the examples of the instant specification is noted but the instant claims argued do not require such low shear viscosities specifically nor is there probative evidence that such low shear viscosities are inherent to the instant claims particularly considering the lack of recitation of molecular weights, types of polyethers, etc. which would affect viscosities. Emmons is not limited to the teachings of table 16 argued by the applicant. The applicant's argument that the viscosity of latex paints including the polyurethanes of the instant claims 1 and 8 is clearly better at low viscosity than those of Emmons lacks probative evidence which is commensurate in scope with the instant claims and the cited prior art. The instant claims recite no viscosities and do not limit the components therein such that the argued viscosities are required. The applicant's arguments do not consider the entire disclosure of Emmons, particularly the portions cited above.

For reasons stated above regarding Emmon's use of the instantly claimed polyurethane reactants, the Applicant's arguments of page 6, the fact that the polyurethane of the patentee encompasses those of the instant claims and the methods overlap, and because the polyurethane of Emmons has a similar use and therefore requires similar properties, it is expected that the polyurethane of the patentee's claims will have a softening point falling within the instantly claimed broad range. The requirements of a prima facie case of obviousness are clearly met above. This rejection is maintained for these reasons and the reasons cited above.

7. All claims are drawn to the same invention claimed in the application prior to the entry of the submission under 37 CFR 1.114 and could have been finally rejected on the grounds



Art Unit: 1714

and art of record in the next Office action if they had been entered in the application prior to entry under 37 CFR 1.114. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL** even though it is a first action after the filing of a request for continued examination and the submission under 37 CFR 1.114. See MPEP § 706.07(b). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

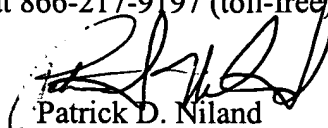
8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Patrick D. Niland whose telephone number is 571-272-1121. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Thursday from 10 to 5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vasu Jagannathan, can be reached on 571-272-1119. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished

Art Unit: 1714

applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Niland', is written over the printed name.

Patrick D. Niland  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 1714